

Remarks

I. Information Disclosure Statement

Applicants submit herewith an Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) by Applicant (1 page), listing references which are or may be material to the examination of the subject application. It is respectfully requested that they be made of record in the file history of the application.

Identification of references in the IDS is not to be construed as an admission by applicants or attorneys for applicants that such references are available as "prior art" against the subject application. The right is reserved to antedate any listed reference in accordance with standard procedures.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 39-66, 68-78 and 80-86 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,948,040 to DeLorme et al. Applicants disagree with the Examiner's positions raised in the Final Office Action dated February 4, 2003. Nevertheless, Applicants have amended claims 39-43, 45, 52-54, 57, 63 and 75 to advance prosecution of the present application. Accordingly, a Version with Markings to Show Changes Made to these claims is annexed hereto as an Appendix. Claims 87-89 have been added which are directed to different aspects of the invention.

As set forth below, DeLorme fails to teach or suggest the claimed invention represented by these claims. Accordingly, base claims 39, 57, 63 and 75 and each of the pending claims depending therefrom -- including new claims 87-89 which depend from claim 39 -- are patentable over DeLorme and the application is therefore in condition for allowance.

The invention is directed to a technique for providing concierge-type services to a user. Claim 39 recites providing concierge-type services by receiving a current request for such services and attempting to fulfill the current request. Claim 39, as amended, now further recites "providing to an agent at least one past request for the concierge-type service associated with the

user to facilitate communicating the current request to the agent” and “recording the current request in association with the user.” As described in the Specification, the past request is presented to the agent for reducing processing time:

“An important feature of the present invention is an activity logging function 234. . . . [W]hen the caller make use of the concierge service, her mobile identification number (MIN), caller details, most frequent requests and *past request activity* is automatically presented to the operator. The caller therefore will not have to resupply repetitive details to the operator, thus *speeding up the process and reducing the operator's processing time*. A fulfillment agent such as supervisor who is not currently active, then handles any concierge requests that are active or open at that particular directory assistance center.”

(Specification, p. 23 (emphasis added).) The concierge-type service is capable of presenting past requested activity to the agent as current requests made by the user are recorded by the agent:

“The operator then inputs [the concierge-type request] details into a caller profile 213 (depicted by numeral 134 in Fig. 7A).” (*Id.*)

DeLorme is directed to a system for travel planning and reservation, and generates documentation relating to such travel plans. Nowhere does DeLorme disclose, teach or suggest providing to an agent at least one past request for the concierge-type service associated with the user to facilitate communicating the current request to the agent. As such, amended claim 39 is patentable over DeLorme. Moreover, because claims 40-56 and new claims 87-89 depend from claim 39, these claims are likewise patentable over DeLorme.

Claim 57, as amended, now recites a method for fulfilling a request for concierge-type services including “selecting an agent . . . to fulfill the request for the concierge-type service . . . based on a location of the agent relative to the location of the provider, wherein the agent and provider are not the same.” Although DeLorme discloses a system that receives a request for, for example, a reservation for dining at a restaurant establishment (a provider) (*see, e.g.*, col. 19, lines 32-58), DeLorme nevertheless fails to teach or suggest a method or system where an *agent*

is selected to fulfill the request based on a *location of the agent relative to the location of the provider*.

The Examiner asserts that selecting an agent to fulfill a request for a concierge-type service based on a location of the agent relative to the location of the provider is “inherent” in or made obvious by DeLorme as “an agent, whether local to that area or an actual agent of the restaurant would have to fulfill the reservation request.” This assertion, however, is flawed. First, an “actual agent” of the restaurant in the Examiner’s example is the provider of goods or services that relate to the user’s request; it is not an agent to process the request for selected goods or service of a provider. Claim 57 has been amended -- adding the language “wherein the agent and provider are not the same -- to reflect this distinction more explicitly. DeLorme, however, does not teach or suggest multiple parties -- *i.e.*, agent and provider -- for fulfilling a user’s request.

Second, because DeLorme does not make any mention or suggestion as to the location of a person or entity that can fulfill a request for goods or services and because such feature of selecting an agent based upon location is not utilized by DeLorme, it is incorrect that DeLorme “inherently” provides that an agent that is local to the area of the restaurant “would have to fulfill the reservation request.” In addition, the Examiner’s hypothetical example wherein a user (not an agent) alters or modifies the request for certain goods or services when the user is in the locale of the provider of such goods or services in no way teaches or suggests “selecting an agent . . . to fulfill the request for the concierge-type service . . . based on a location of the agent relative to the location of the provider, wherein the agent and provider are different.” In this hypothetical, there is no agent and no selection made; a user is instead merely contacting a provider to change the request. Accordingly, the elements of claim 57 are not inherent in or made obvious by DeLorme.

The “Response to Arguments” section of the February 4, 2003 Office Action provides that it is “well known to have local or regional call centers/ACDs wherein agents would be fulfilling services,” and that therefore DeLorme “contemplates” the use of a “local agent servicing a customer.” (February 4, 2003 Office Action, p. 7.) Such a position taken by the

Examiner is untenable. Claim 57 recites a method for fulfilling a request for a concierge-type service from a user where an agent is selected to fulfill the request “based on a location of the agent relative to the location *of the provider*.” (Emphasis added.) The Examiner’s assertion, however, relates to selecting an “agent” based upon the location of the customer or caller, rather than that of the provider as in the claimed invention.

Claim 57 is patentable over DeLorme for additional reasons. Claim 57 recites that in response to a user request concerning selected goods or service, a provider of the selected goods or service is identified based upon data concerning “preferences of the user in a stored record.” While DeLorme, at best, teaches fulfilling a user’s request according to the user’s preferences, it does not teach or suggest storing such preferences -- let alone storing them in a separate record, e.g., the aforementioned caller profile 213, for facilitating and speeding up the fulfillment of concierge-type service requests. As such, amended claim 57 is patentable over DeLorme. Moreover, because claims 58-62 depend from claim 57, these claims are likewise patentable over DeLorme.

DeLorme also fails to teach or suggest providing an information assistance service which includes receiving a communication call from a communication device, “detecting by a processor the identifier associated with the communication device,” and “automatically incorporating” the identifier in a record in fulfilling a request for a concierge-type service, as amended claim 63 now recites. Such claim language is supported by the Specification:

“[T]he interface includes a plurality of sets of fields, each of the fields capable of capturing data input. The first set of fields relate to identification of a calling customer. The first of the three fields in the first set is the ‘Name of Reservation’ indicating the calling customer requesting the reservation. *The second field is called the ‘Caller MIN’ indicating the calling customer’s Mobile Identification Number (MIN).* The third field is the “Carried ID” indicating the carrier who provided the call to the calling center. The system may be designed to input the information into the fields *automatically*. The calling center’s switching equipment described below is capable of detecting the information associated with these fields directly from the incoming call. Thus, when an operator

selects this interface in connection with a call, these fields may be automatically filled in.”

(Specification, pp. 8-9 (emphasis added).) The switch that detects the identifier associated with the communication device is described in the Specification:

Switching matrix platform 114 includes expandable central processing unit (“EXCPU”) 304 and/or matrix central processing unit (“MXCPU”) 304. EXCPU/MXCPU 304 serves as an interface for switching matrix platform 114 to switching matrix host computer 128 (via switch data link 122). EXCPU/MXCPU 304 and other components of switching matrix platform 114 communicate through shared communication path 302, commonly called a “midplane.” In the currently-described embodiment, midplane 302 utilizes a time division multiplexing (“TDM”) method of sharing a common pathway. Thus, a plurality of data (other than SS7 messaging) and/or voice streams can be interlaced onto the single path, separated by time.

Another board-level component of switching matrix platform 114 is multi-frequency digital signal processor (“MFDSP”) unit 310, which includes four single in-line memory module (“SIMM”) packagings. Each SIMM packaging is comprised of four DSP arrays. Each DSP array is composed of multiple, illustratively sixteen, programmable DSPs. The DSPs can be programmed or reprogrammed to function as, among other things, call progress analyzers (“CPA”), call progress generators (“CPG”), multi-frequency (“MF”) receivers or transmitters, dual-tone multi-frequency (“DTMF”) receivers or transmitters, or conference units, depending upon, the demand placed on directory assistance center 100 and switching matrix platform 114 for each corresponding function.

(Specification, pp. 16-17).

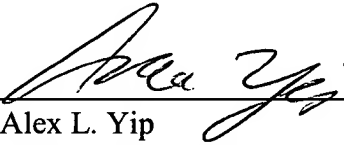
Nowhere does DeLorme teach or suggest any processor configured for detecting an identifier associated with a communication device that connects with the system described therein. System claim 75, tracking method claim 63, includes similar limitations. As such, amended claims 63 and 75, together with their dependent claims, are patentable over DeLorme.

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In view of the foregoing, each of claims 39-66, 68-78 and 80-86 as amended, and 87-89 as added is believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration of these claims is requested and allowance of the application is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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